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1824

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Oxberry's Edition.

EVADNE;

648
1594

OR, THE STATUE.

A TRAGEDY;

By R. Sheil, Esq.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY
MARKED WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS,
AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

By W. OXBERRY, *Comedian.*

BOSTON:

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1824.



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Remarks.

EVADNE.

THE plot of this piece is borrowed in a great measure from "The Traytor,"* a tragedy by Shirley, one of the last, though by no means the least, of our old English dramatists. This excellent school has been altogether too much slighted ; but Shirley has met with a more than usual portion of neglect, and even Mr. Lamb, though otherwise a judicious critic, speaks of him in no very favourable terms. "Shirley," he observes, "claims a place amongst the worthies of this period, not so much for any transcendant genius in himself, as that he was the last of a great race, all of whom spoke nearly the same language, and had a set of moral feelings and actions in common."—Few will concur in this estimate of Shirley's genius ; but indeed the whole note is not written with the usual judgment of this elegant and accomplished scholar ; no doubt these poets had "a set of moral feelings and notions in common ;" for, however men

* This play though often attributed to Shirley is nothing more than an alteration by him from the work of Rivers, and the copy of the play, bearing date 1692, has the name of Rivers on the title-page. There is an edition as early as 1635, according to the Biographia Dramatica.

may differ in the practice of morality, there can be no variance of opinion as to what constitutes moral obligation; and in regard to the old dramatists speaking nearly the same language, the assertion is perhaps more trite than true: the style of Ben Johnson, for instance, is no more like that of Ford, than the style of Æschylus is like that of Euripides; how could it be when their minds were so differently constituted—a difference that is sufficiently pointed out by the choice of their subjects?

Mr. Sheil too seems not to have formed a fair estimate of Shirley's genius; he has omitted some scenes of unquestionable excellence, and has often only taken the ideas of the old dramatist, when he had better have given them in their original language: let any one compare the following extracts, and judge how much the old poet has lost by the alteration:

But when you're laid within your sepulchre,
And rot most honourably, then I fear me
A lesser shame will not befall your house
For all the graven marbles on your tomb!
Your Sister——

Evadne, p. 49.

——Go, practise immortality,
And ere thy body hath three days inhabited
A melancholy chamber in the earth,
This sister shall be ravish'd,
Maugre thy dust and heraldry.

Traytor, Act I. p. 45, 4to. Ed. 1692.

Lud. Do not waste in idle wrath—

Col. My fathers! do you hear it in the tomb?
Do not your mouldering remnants of the earth
Feel horrid animation in the grave,

And strive to burst the ponderous sepulchre,
And throw it off?—

Evadne, p. 45.

Lo. Then I'm sorry.

Sci. Why should *you* be sorry, sir?

You say it is *my* sister he would strumpet;
Mine—*Amidea*?—'Tis a wound *you* feel not;
But it strikes through, and through the poor *Sciarrah*;
I do not think, but all the ashes of
My ancestors do swell in their dark urns
At this report, of *Amidea's* shame:
It is their cause as well as mine, and should
Heaven suffer the Duke's sin to pass unpunish'd,
Their dust must, of necessity, conspire
To make an earthquake in the temple.

Traytor, Act II. p. 10.

In its fable, the modern play had decidedly the advantage, though it has no single scene that can compete with the old dramatist; the fable of *Evadne* is more compact than that of the *Traytor*, and its different characters are more essentially connected with each other; but, at the same time, its catastrophe is feebleness itself when compared with the powerful winding up of the original story.

Of the language of *Evadne*, much may be said in praise, and little in censure; it is for the most part pleasing, yet sometimes it affords passages too much in the vein of *Hieronymo* and *Tamburlaine*; for example;—

Hath any thing befallen that should have blown
On the red iron of thy heated wrath,
And steeped thee back to meekness?—

Page 50.

—————He trembles! he relents!
I read it in the glimmering of his face.——

Page 58.

Thou art all made of blood, and to the sun
Art grown detestable.——

Page 41.

Some dæmon paints it on the coloured air.

Page 23.

—————I have gaz'd upon it,
In hope that with the glaring of mine eyes
I might burn out the false and treacherous word;
But still 'tis there.—No more—else it will turn
My brain to a red furnace,——

Page 16.

The faults of this kind are, however, too few to detract from the general merit of the play, which, though not of the first order, is evidently the work of a scholar and a man of talent.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is two hours and a half.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.	- - - - -	is meant	- - - - -	Right Hand.
L.H.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Left Hand.
S.E.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Second Entrance.
U.E.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Upper Entrance.
M.D.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Middle Door.
D.F.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Door in Flat.
R.H.D.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Left Hand Door.

Persons Represented.

<i>The King of Naples</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Ludovico, his favourite</i>	- - - - -	Mr. M'Cready.
<i>Colonna</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Young.
<i>Vicentio</i>	- - - - -	Mr. C. Kemble.
<i>Spalatro</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Connor.
<i>Officer</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Norris.
<i>Servant</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Healey.
<i>Evadne, sister of Colonna</i>	- - - - -	Miss O'Neill.
<i>Oltola, in love with Vicentio</i>	- - - - -	Mrs. Faucit.

Scene—Naples.

Prologue.

WRITTEN BY CHARLES PHILLIPS, ESQ.

Spoken by Mr. Egerton.

WHEN erst in Eden's solitary bowers,
The primal Man beheld his world of flowers,
Eternal sunshine tinged the glorious sky,
Alternate beauties wooed his wandering eye ;
While infant Love, waving its odorous wing,
Woke the wild spirit of the breathing Spring.
Yet still through Paradise he restless strayed,
Its bower was songless, and its sun was shade ;
E'en as the Bard of Albany* has sung,
In strains that live for age, and yet are young,
Creation bloom'd, a decorated wild,—
It was not Paradise—till Woman smiled.
Fair on his view the Paragon arose,
Source of his bliss, and solace of his woes.
By bounteous Heaven ordain'd to sooth his fall,
And sole survive, a recompense for all.
Who has not felt her chaste and charmed power
Beguile his sad, and raise his raptur'd hour ?
If such there be—Oh ! let him bend his sight

* Albany was the ancient name of Scotland.—CAMPBELL.

Far from the hallowed vision of to-night.
To-night, our Bard, in lovely woman's cause,
Alone from manly bosoms asks applause ;
From British bosoms asks, without a fear,
Assured that such a cause is sacred here.
And you, ye fair, see young *Evadne* prove
Her vestal honour, and her plighted love ;
See her, the light and joy of every eye,
Veil all her charms in spotless chastity ;
And, 'mid the fires and phantasies of youth,
Turn strong temptations to the cause of truth !
Oh ! may each maid *Evadne's* virtue share,
With heart as faithful though with form less fair.
You, too, who hope ambition's height to climb,
Toiling to fortune through the maze of crime,
Behold, as in the daring "fool of Crete."
Of such design, the lesson, and the fate :
Behold the wing that lifts it to the skies
Melt in the sun to which it sought to rise.
Such is the strain by which the moral bard
Seeks from a moral people his reward :
Seeks, in simplicity, without one aid
From scenic pomp, or pasteboard cavalcade.
Britons, be just, and as our "Statue" stands,
Like *MEMNON's* image from its master's hands,
With one bright ray illumine the sculptured toil,
And bid it breathe—the creature of your smile.

EVADNE ;

OR, THE STATUE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Palace of the King of Naples.*

The KING, SPALATRO, and ten Courtiers, two Banners, and six Guards, discovered.

King. Didst say the Marquis of Colonna prays Admission to our presence ?

Spal. Aye, my liege,
He stands in the anti-chamber, with a brow
As stern as e'er was knitted in the folds
Of ranc'rous discontent.

King. I have noted oft (*Comes forward.*)
His absence from the court, the which I deem
His envy of our true Ludovico.

Spal. Deem it no little benefit, my liege ;
His deep and murky smile, his gather'd arms,
In whose close pride he folds himself—his raw
And pithy apothegms of scorn have made him
Our laughter and our hatred ; we are all

Grown weary of this new Diogenes,
Who rolls his hard and new philosophy
Against all innocent usage of the court.

King. We must not bid him hence—he has a
sister—

Spal. The fair Evadne !—

King. Fairer than the morn ;
Who has not seen her, knows of beauty less
Than blind men of Aurora. For her sake
We give him ample scope, and we are glad
He comes to visit us.

Col. (Without, L.H.) I'll hear no more.
Colonna does not often importune
With his unwelcome presence. Let me pass—
For once I must be heard.

Enter Two COURTIERS and COLONNA, L.H.

My liege !—

1st. Court. Hold back !

What right hast thou to rush before the sight
Of sacred royalty ?

Col. The right that all

Good subjects ought to have—to do him service.

My liege— (*Courtiers retire L.H. and Spalatro
crosses behind to R.H.*)

King. You are welcome—

And would you had brought your lovely sister too.

Col. My sister, did you say ? My sister, sir ?
She is not fit for courts ; she would be called
(For she has something left of nature still)
A simple creature here ;
She is not fit for courts, and I have hope

She never will : but let it pass—I come
To implore a favour of you.

King. Whatsoe'er

Colonna prays, sure cannot be refus'd.

Col. The favour that I ask is one, my liege
That princes often find it hard to grant.

'Tis simply this—that you will hear the truth.

King. Proceed, and play the monitor, my lord.

Col. I see your courtiers here do stand amazed.
Of them I first would speak—There is not one
Of this wide troop of glittering parasites,
That circle you, but in soul
Is your base foe. These smilers here, my liege,
These sweet melodious flatterers, my liege,—
That flourish on the flexibility
Of their soft countenances,—are the vermin
That haunt a prince's ear with the false buzz
Of villanous assentation.—These are they
Who from your mind have flouted every thought
Of the great weal of the people. These are they
Who from your ears have shut the public cry,
And with the poisoned gales of flattery
Create around you a foul atmosphere
Of unresounding denseness, thro' the which
Their loud complaints cannot reverberate,
And perish ere they reach you.

King. Who complains,—
Who dares complain of us?

Col. All dare complain
Behind you—I before you. Do not think
Because you load your people with the weight
Of camels, they possess the camel's patience.
A deep groan labours in the nation's heart :

The very calm and stillness of the day
 Gives augury of the earthquake. All without
 Is as the marble smooth, and all within
 Is rotten as the carcase it contains ;
 Tho' ruin knock not at the palace-gate,
 Yet will the palace-gate unfold itself
 To ruin's felt-shod tread.

King. (Aside.) Insolent villain !

Col. Your gorgeous banquets—your luxuries
 —your pomps,

Your palaces, and all the sumptuousness
 Of painted royalty will melt away,
 As in a theatre the glittering scene
 Doth vanish with the shifter's magic hand,
 And the mock pageant perishes. My liege,
 A single virtuous action hath more worth
 Than all the pyramids, and glory writes
 A more enduring epitaph upon
 One generous deed, than the sarcophagus
 In which Sesostris meant to sleep.

Spal. (Coming forward.) Forbear !
 It is a subject's duty to arrest
 Thy rash and blasphemous speech.

King. Let him speak on—
 The monarch who can listen to Colonna,
 Is not the worthless tyrant he would make me.

(Spalatro retires.)

Col. I deem not you that tyrant—if I did—
 No !—Nature framing you, did kindly mean,
 And o'er your heart hath sprinkled many drops
 Of her blest charities. But you are led
 From virtue and from wisdom far away,
 By men whose every look's a lie—whose hearts

Are a large heap of cankers, and of whom
The chief is a rank traitor!

King. Traitor! whom meanest thou?

Col. Your favourite, your minister, my liege.
That smooth-fac'd hypocrite—that—

King. Here he comes!

Col. It is the traitor's self—I am glad of it,
'That to his face I may confront.—

Enter LUDOVICO, R.H.—he advances rapidly to the king.

Lud. My liege,
I hasten to your presence, to inform you—
Colonna here! (*Starting.*)

Col. The same—Colonna's here!
And if you wish to learn his theme of speech,
Learn that he spoke of treason and of you.

Lud. Did I not stand before the hallowed eye
Of majesty, I would teach thee with my sword
How to reform thy phrase—But I am now
In my king's presence, and with awe-struck soul,
As if within religion's peaceful shrine,
Humbly I bend before him. What, my liege,
Hath this professor of austerity,
And practiser of slander, uttered
Against your servant's honour?

King. He hath called you—

Col. A traitor! and I warn you to beware
Of the false viper nurtured in your heart.
He has filled the city with a band of men,
By fell allegiance sworn unto himself,
There are a thousand ruffians at his word

Prepared to cut our throats. The city swarms
 With murderers' faces, and tho' reason now
 Moves like a muffled dwarf, 'twill speedily
 Swell to a blood-robed giant!—If my liege,
 What I have said doth not unfilm your eye,
 'Twere vain to tell you more,
 I have said, my liege,
 And tried to interrupt security
 Upon her purple cushion—he, perhaps,
 Will find some drowsy syrup to lay down
 Her opening eye-lids into sleep again,
 And call back slumber with a lullaby
 Of sweetest adulation.—Fare you well !

Lud. Hold back !

Col. Not for your summons, my good lord
 The courtly air doth not agree with me,
 And I respire it painfully. My lord,
 Hear my last words—Beware, Ludovico !

Lud. Villain, come back !

Col. I wear a sword, my lord. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Lud. He flies before me—and the sight of him
 He dares accuse, came like the morning sun
 On the night-walking enemy of mankind,
 That shrinks before the day-light—yes, he fled,
 And I would straight pursue him, and send back,
 On my sword's point, his falsehoods to his heart—
 But that I here before the assembled court
 Would vindicate myself—a traitor !—who
 In any action of Ludovico
 Finds echo to that word ?

King. I cannot think
 Thou hast repaid me with ingratitude.

Lud. I do not love to make a boisterous boast

Of my past services, and marshal forth
In glittering array the benefit
That I have done my sovereign—what I did
Was but my duty Yet would I inquire
If he who has fought your battles, and hath made
A very thrall of victory—who oft
Has back to Naples from the field of fight,
Led your triumphant armies,—
He whose hand
Hath lined the oppressive diadem with down,
And ta'en its pressure from the golden round—
If he whose cheek hath at the midnight lamp
Grown pale with study of his prince's weal
Is like to be a traitor?—who, my liege,
Hath often like the daylight's god transpierced
The hydra-headed monster of rebellion,
And stretched it bleeding at your feet? who oft
Hath from the infuriate people exorcised
The talking dæmon, "*liberty*," and choaked
The voice of clamorous demagogues?—I dare
To tell you 'twas Ludovico!

King. It was.

Lud. Who calls me traitor? He whose breath
What'er it blows upon—he— [doth taint
But ask yourself, my lord, if I be mad?
For were I that, that he would make Ludovico,
The cells of frenzy, not the scaffold's plank,
Would best beseem my treason. In your love
My fortunes grow and flourish unto heaven;
And I should win by treason but the load
Of the world's execration, while the fierce
And ravenous vulture of remose would tear
The vitals of my soul, and make my heart

Its black immortal banquet ! I a traitor !
 At first, I only meant to scorn. But now,
 The bursting passion hath o'ermastered me,
 And my voice choaks in anguish ! Oh, my liege,
 Your giving audience to this rancorous man,
 Who envies me the greatness of your smile,
 Hath done me wrong, and stabs me thro' and
 A traitor !—your Ludovico ! [thro'.

King. My lord.

Lud. (*Kneels.*) Here is my heart ! If you have
 any mercy, [forth,
 Strike thro' that heart, and as the blood flows
 Drown your suspicions in the purple stream.

King. Arise, Ludovico, and do not think
 I have harboured in my breast a single thought
 That could dishonour thee.

(*Raises and embraces him.*)

Lud. My royal master !
 The power of gratitude mounts from my heart,
 And rushes to mine eyes, that are too apt
 To play the woman with me. See, they are
 falling—

Oh ! let them not profane your sacred cheek,
 But bathe my prince's feet.

King. Ludovico,
 We have wrong'd thee, not by doubt,
 But by our sufferance of Colonna's daring—
 Whom from my sight into the dungeon's depth
 I had flung, but that I hope—Let us apart—

(*Draws Ludovico aside in front, L.H.*)

But that I hope, Ludovico, that yet
 I may possess me of his sister's charms.

Lud. There you have struck upon the inmost
 spring

Of all Colonna's hate ; for in obedience
 To your high will, I humbly made myself
 Your pleasure's minister, and to her ear
 I bore your proffered love, which he discovering
 Hath tried to root me from my prince's heart—

King. Where thou shalt ever flourish ! But,
 Ludovico, [friend ?

But thou hast told her !—Is there hope, my

Lud. She shall be yours—nay, more—and
 well you know

That you may trust your servant—not alone
 Colonna's lovely sister shall be yours :

But, mark my speech, Colonna's self shall draw
 The chaste white curtains from her virgin-bed,
 And lead you to her arms !

King. What ! her fierce brother
 Yield his consent ?

Lud. Inquire not how, my liege,
 I would accomplish this—trust to my pledge—
 This very night.

King. To-night ! Am I so near
 To heaven, Ludovico ?

Lud. You are, my liege,
 To-night upon the breast of paradise
 You shall most soundly sleep. (Aside.)

King. My faithful friend !
 And dost thou say, Colonna will himself—— ?

Lud. Colonna's self shall bear her to your
 And bid her on to dalliance. [arms,

King. Oh, my friend,
 Thou art the truest servant that e'er yet
 Tended his sovereign's wish : but dost not fear,
 Her purposed marriage with Vicentio

May make some obstacle ?

Lud. I have recalled him
From Florence, whither as ambassador,
In honourable exile he was sent.

King. Recalled him ! 'Twas to interrupt his
That he was sent. [love

Lud. My projects need his coming.
For I intend to make Vicentio
An instrument to crown you with her charms !

King. How shall I bless thee, my Ludovico ?
Dost thou think

'Tis strange I pine for her—but why inquire
Of thee, who once wert kindled by her charms.

Lud. My liege ! *(A little disturbed.)*

King. She did prefer Vicentio.

Lud. She shall prefer you to Vicentio.

King. My dear Ludovico, within my soul
More closely will I wear thee !—
Tell her we'll shower all honour on her head.
And here, Ludovico, to testify
That we have given ourselves, bear to her heart
This image of her king !

Lud. I am in all your servant.

King. My Ludovico,
We never can reward thee ! Come my friends,
(Crosses to R.H.)

Let's to some fresh-imagined sport, and wile
The languid hours in some device of joy,
To help along the lazy flight of time,
And quicken him with pleasure. My Ludovico !
Remember !

*[Exeunt King and ten of the Courtiers, R.H.
Banners and guards, R.H.U.E. ; Spalatro,*

and four other Conspirators remain behind with Ludovico.

Lud. He is gone,
And my unloosened spirit dares again
To heave within my bosom!—Oh, Colonna,
With an usurious vengeance I'll repay thee,
And cure the talking devil in thy tongue!
(*To Spalatro.*)—Give me thy hand, and let thy
pulse again

Beat with a temperate and healthful motion,
Of full security. We are safe, my friends,
And in the genius of Ludovico,
An enterprise shall triumph.

Spal. We began to tremble when you entered
—but full soon

With admiration we beheld you tread
Secure the steeps of ruin, and preserve us.

Lud. That damn'd Colonna!—by the glorious
Of my nativity, I do not burn [star
For empire, with a more infuriate thirst,
Than for revenge!

Spal. My poniard's at your service.

(*First and Second Conspirators half draw their daggers.*)

Lud. Not for the world, my friends!
I'll turn my vengeance to utility,
And must economize my hate—Whom think you
Have I marked out assassin of the king?

Spal. Piero, perchance—he strikes the poin-
ard deep.

Lud. A better hand at it.

Spal. Bartolo, then—
He pushes the stiletto to the heart.

Lud. No!

Spal. Then yourself will undertake the deed.

Lud. That were against all wisdom—No, my
Colonna— [friends,

Spal. What, Colonna?—he that now
Accused you here?

Lud. Colonna!—

Spal. 'Tis impossible!—
From his great father he inherited
A sort of passion in his loyalty:
In him it mounts to folly.

Lud. Yet Spalatro,
I'll make a murderer of him—know you not
He has a sister?

Spal. Yes, the fair Evadne,
You once did love yourself.

Lud. There thou hast touched me.
And I am weak enough to love her yet,
If that indeed be love that doth consume me;
It is a sort of monster in my heart,
Made up of horrid contrarieties!
She scorns me for that smooth Vicentio—
Not only does he thwart me in my love,
But, well I know his influence in the state
Would, when the king is sent to paradise,
Be cast between me and the throne—he
dies!—

Colonna too shall perish, and the crown
Shall with Evadne's love be mine.

Enter OFFICER, L.H.

How now?

Officer. My lord, the lady Olivia
Waits on your highness.

Lud. I desired her here,
And straight I will attend her. [*Exit Officer, L.H.*
With a straw

A town may be consumed, and I employ
This woman's passion for Vicentio,
As I would use a poison'd pin, to kill.

Spal. She long hath lov'd Vicentio.

Lud. He shall wed her—
And from the hand of Hymen, death shall snatch
The nuptial torch, and use it for his own !

I haste me to her presence.

(*Takes out the King's picture.*) Come ! fair bauble,
Thou now must be employed.—(*To Spal.*)—Dost
thou not think,

Even in this image, that he bears the soft
And wanton aspect with the which he bid me
To cater for his villanous appetite—
And with what luxury ?—Evadne's charms !—
Evadne that I love ?—

Spal. But, didst thou not
Thyself evoke that passion in his breast ?

Lud. I did, 'tis true—but for mine own success.
I hate him !

There is the very face with which he first
Pour'd his unholy wishes in mine ear—
Ha ! dost thou smile upon me ?—I will turn
Those glittering eyes, where love doth now in-
habit,

To two dark hollow palaces, for death
To keep his mouldering state in.
He dares to hope that I will make myself

Lud. And I will crown your passion with the
flowers

Of Hymen's yellow garland—Trust me, Olivia,
That once dissever'd from Evadne's love,
He will soon be taught to prize your nobler
frame,

And more enkindled beauty—Well, 'tis known
Ere he beheld the sorceress

He deemed you fairest of created things,
And would have proffered love, had not—

Oliv. I pray you,
With gems of flattery do not disturb
The fount of bitterness within my soul;—
For dropped tho' ne'er so nicely, they but stir
The poisoned waters as they fall.—I have said
I will obey you.

Lud. With this innocent page
Will I light up a fire within Vicentio,—
But you must keep it flaming;—I have ta'en
Apt means to drive him into jealousy. [ear)
By scattering rumours (which have reached his
Before he comes to Naples,—e'en in Florence
Have I prepared his soft and yielding mind
To take the seal that I would fix upon it.
I do expect him with the fleeting hour,—
For, to my presence he must come to bear
His embassy's commission, and be sure
He leaves me with a poison in his heart,
Evadne's lips shall never suck away.

Oliv. Then will I hence, and if 'tis possible,
Your bidding shall be done.—Vicentio!

Enter VICENTIO, R.H.

Vic. Hail to my lord !

Lud. Welcome, Vicentio !

I have not clasp'd your hand this many a day !
Welcome from Florence. In your absence, sir,
Time seemed to have lost his feathers.

Vic. It was kind

To waste a thought upon me.—Fair Olivia,
Florence hath dimmed mine eyes, or I must else
Have seen a sun-beam sooner.—(*Crosses to centre.*)—Fair Olivia,

How does your lovely friend ?

Oliv. What friend, my lord ?

Vic. I trust nought evil hath befallen Evadne,
That you should feign to understand me not.
How does my beautiful and plighted love ?

Oliv. How does she, sir ? I pray you, my good
lord

To ask such tender question of the king.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Vic. What meant she by the king ? (*Aside.*)

Lud. You seem, Vicentio,
O'ershadow'd with reflection—should you
Not have used some soft detaining phrase to one,
Who should at least be pitied ?

Vic. I came here

To re-deliver to your hands, my lord,
The high commission of mine embassy,
That long delayed my marriage. You, I deem
My creditor, in having used your sway
In my recall to Naples.

Lud. In return for such small service,

I hope

That you will not forget Ludovico,
When in the troop of thronging worshippers,
At distance you behold his stooping plume
Bend in humility.

Vic. What means my lord? [fortune

Lud. Act not this ignorance—your glorious
Hath filled the common mouth—

Your image stands already in the mart
Of pictured ridicule.—Come, do not wear
The look of studied wonderment—you know
Howe'er I stand upon the highest place
In the king's favour, that you will full soon
Supplant the poor Ludovico.

Vic. I am no Œdipus.

Lud. You would have me speak in simpler
phrase ; Vicentio,
You are to be the favourite of the king.

Vic. The favourite of the king !

Lud. Certes, Vicentio.

In our Italian courts, the generous husband
Receives his monarch's recompensing smile,
That with alchymic power, can turn the mass
Of dull opprobrious shame, to one bright heap
Of honour and emolument.

I bid you joy, my lord—why, how is this ?
Do you not yet conceive me ? Know you not
You are to wed the mistress of the king ?
Colonna's sister—aye, I have said it, sir,—
Now, do you understand me ?

Vic. Villain, thou liest !

Lud. What ? are you not to marry her ?

Vic. Thou liest ;

Tho' thou wert ten times what thou art already,
Not all the laurels heaped upon thy head
Should save thee from the lightnings of my

Lud. If it were my will, [wrath!

The movement of my hand should beckon death
To thy presumption. But I have proved too oft
I bore a fearless heart, to think you dare
To call me coward—and I am too wise
To think I can revenge an injury
By giving you my life. But I compassionate,
Nay, I have learned to esteem thee for a wrath,
That speaks thy noble nature.

Fare thee well! (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Thy pulse is now too fevered for the cure

I honestly intended—yet, before

I part, here take this satisfying proof

Of what a woman's made of.

(*Gives him a letter.*)

Vic. It is her character!

Hast thou shed phospor on the innocent page,
That it has turned to fire?

Lud. Thou hast thy fate.

Vic. 'Tis signed, "Evadne."

Lud. Yes, it is—farewell!

Vic. For heaven's sake, hear me.—Stay.—

Oh, pardon me

For the rash utterance of a frantic man—

Speak! in mercy speak!

Lud. I will,

In mercy speak, indeed.—In mercy to

That fervid generosity of heart

That I behold within thee,

Vic. From whom is this?

Lud. From whom? look there!

Vic. Evadne!

Lud. 'Tis written to the king and to my hand.
For he is proud of it, as if it were
A banner of high victory, he bore it,
To evidence his valour.—It is grown
His cup-theme now, and your Evadne's name
Is lisped with all the insolence on his tongue
Of satiated triumph—he exclaims—
The poor Vicentio!

Vic. The poor Vicentio!

Lud. What! shall he murder him?—(*Aside.*)
—no, no,—Colonna!

The poor Vicentio!—and he oftentimes
Cries, that he pities you!

Vic. He pities me!

Lud. I own that some time I was infidel
To all the bombast vaunting of the king,
But—

Vic. 'Tis Evadne!—I have gazed upon it,
In hope that with the glaring of mine eyes
I might burn out the false and treacherous
word—

But, still 'tis there—no more—else will it turn
My brain to a red furnace,—Look you, my lord—
Thus as I rend the cursed evidence
Of that vile woman's falsehood—thus I cast
My love into the winds, and as I tread
Upon the poisoned fragments of the snake
That stings me into madness, thus, Ludovico,
Thus do I trample on her!

Lud. Have you ne'er heard,
For 'twas so widely scattered in the voice

Of common rumour, that the very wind,
If it blew fair for Florence—

Vic. I have heard

Some whispers, which I long had flung away
With an incredulous hatred from my heart—
But now, this testimony has conjured
All other circumstances in one vast heap
Of damned certainty!—Farewell, my lord—

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Lud. Hear me, Vicentio,
Vengeance is left you still—the deadliest too
That a false woman can be made to feel:
Take her example—be not satisfied
With casting her for ever from your heart,
But to the place that she has forfeited,
Exalt a lovelier than— but I perceive
You are not in a mood to hear me now—
Some other time, Vicentio—and, meanwhile,
Despite your first tempestuous suddenness,
You will think that I but meant your honour well
In this proceeding.

Vic. I believe I owe you
That sort of desperate gratitude, my lord,
The dying patient owes the barbarous knife,
That delves in throes of mortal agony,
And tears the rooted cancer from his heart!

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in Colonna's Palace.*

Enter EVADNE, M.D. looking at a picture.

Evad. 'Tis strange he comes not! thro' the
city's gates

His panting courser passed before the sun
Had climbed to his meridian, yet he comes not!—
Ah! Vicentio,
To know thee near me, yet behold thee not,
Is sadder than to think thee far away ;
For I had rather that a thousand leagues
Of mountain ocean should dis sever us,
Than thine own heart, Vicentio.—Sure, Vicentio,
If thou didst know with what a pining gaze
I feed mine eyes upon thine image here,
Thou wouldst not now leave thine Evadne's love
To this same cold idolatry.

Enter OLIVIA, unperceived, L.H.U.E.

I will swear
That smile's a false one, for it sweetly tells
No tarrying indifference.—Olivia! [hours
Oliv. I have stolen unperceived upon your
Of lonely meditation, and surprised
Your soft soliloquies to that fair face.—
Nay, do not blush—reserve that rosy dawn
For the soft pressure of Vicentio's lips.

Evad. You mock me, fair Olivia,—I confess
That musing on my cold Vicentio's absence,
I quarrelled with the blameless ivory.

Oliv. He was compelled as soon as he arrived,
To wait upon the great Ludovico ;
Meanwhile your soft, expecting moments flow
In tender meditation on the face,
You dare to gaze upon in ivory
With fonder aspect, than when you behold
Its bright original ; for then 'tis meet

Your pensive brows be bent upon the ground,
 And sighs as soft as zephyrs on the wave
 Should gently heave your heart.—Is it not so?
 Nay, do not now rehearse your part, I pray;—
 Reserve those downcast lookings for Vicentio;
 That's a fair picture—let me, if you dare
 Entrust the treasure to another's hand,
 Let me look on it. (*Takes Vicentio's picture.*)
 What a sweetness plays
 On those half-opened lips!—He gazed on you
 When those bright eyes were painted.

Evad. You have got
 A heart so free of care, that you can mock
 Your pensive friend with such light merriment.
 But hark! I hear a step.

Oliv. (Aside.) Now fortune aid me
 In her precipitation.

Evad. It is himself!—
 Olivia, he is coming.—Well I know
 My Lord Vicentio hastens to mine eyes!
 The picture—pr'ythee give it back to me—
 I must constrain you to it.

*Oliv. (Who has substituted the picture of the
 king.)* It is in vain
 To struggle with you then—with what a grasp
 You rend it from my hand, as if it were
 Vicentio that I had stolen away.

(*Gives her the king's picture, which Evadne
 places in her bosom.*)
 I triumph!—(*Aside.*)—He is coming—I must
 leave you,
 Nor interrupt the meeting of your hearts
 By my officious presence. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Evad. It is himself!
 Swiftly he passes through the colonnade,
 Oh ! Vicentio,
 Thy coming bears me joy as bright as e'er
 Beat thro' the heart of woman, that was made
 For suffering, and for transport !—Oh, Vicentio !

Enter VICENTIO, R.H.

Are you then come at last ?—do I once more
 Behold my bosom's lord, whose tender sight
 Is necessary for my happiness
 As light for heaven !—My lord !—Vicentio !—
 I blush to speak the transport in my heart,
 But I am rapt to see you.

Vic. Dissembling woman ! (*Aside.*)

Evad. How is this, my lord ?
 You look altered. [did !

Vic. But you do not look altered—would you
 Let me peruse the face where loveliness
 Stays, like the light after the sun is set.
 Sphered in the stillness of those heaven-blue eyes,
 The soul sits beautiful ; the high white front,
 Smooth as the brow of Pallas, seems a temple
 Sacred to holy thinking ! and those lips
 Wear the sweet smile of sleeping infancy,
 They are so innocent.—Oh ! Evadne,
 Thou art not altered—would thou wert !

Evad. Vicentio, [Vicentio,
 This strangeness I scarce hoped for.—Say,
 Has any ill befallen you ?—I perceive
 That its warm bloom hath parted from your
 Ah me ! you are not well, Vicentio. [cheek,

Vic. In sooth, I am not.—There is in my
breast [anodyne,
A wound that mocks all cure—no salve, nor
Nor medicinal herb, can e'er allay
The festering of that agonizing wound
You have driven into my heart!

Evad. 1 ?

Vic. Why, Evadne,
Why did you ever tell me that you loved me ?
Why was I not in mercy spurned away,
Scorned, like Ludovico ? for unto him
You dealt in honour, and despised his love :
But me you soothed and flattered—sighed and
 blushed— [now
And smiled and wept, for you can weep ; (even
Your tears flow by volition, and your eyes
Convenient fountains have begun to gush,)
To stab me with a falsehood yet unknown
In falsest woman's perfidy ?

Evad. Vicentio,
Why am I thus accused? What have I done?

Vic. What!—are you grown already an adept
In cold dissimulation? Have you stopped
All access from your heart into your face?
Do you not blush?

Evad. I do, indeed, for you !

Vic. The king?

Evad. The king? [high

Vic. Come, come, confess at once, and wear it
Upon your towering forehead—swell your port—
Away with this unseemly bashfulness,
That will be deemed a savageness at court—
Confront the talking of the busy world—

Tell them you are the mistress of the king,
 Tell them you are Colonna's sister too ;
 But hark you, madam—prithee do not say
 You are Vicentio's wife ! *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Evad. Injurious man ! [heaven

Vic. The very winds from the four parts of
 Blew it throughout the city—

Evad. And if angels
 Cried, trumpet tongued, that I was false to you,
 You should not have believed it.—You forget
 Who dares to stain a woman's honesty,
 Does her a wrong, as deadly as the brand
 He fears upon himself.—Go, go, Vicentio—
 You are not what I deemed you !—Mistress ?
 fie !

Go, go, Vicentio ! let me not behold
 The man who has reviled me with a thought
 Dishonouring as that one !—*(Crosses to L.H.)*—

Oh ! Vicentio,
 Do I deserve this of you ?

Vic. If I had wronged her !—

Evad. I will not descend
 To vindicate myself—dare to suspect me—
 My lord, I am to guess that you came here,
 To speak your soul's revolt, and to demand
 Your plighted vows again.—If for this
 You tarry here, I freely give you back
 Your late repented faith—Farewell forever !

(As she is going out L.H.)

Vic. Evadne !

Evad. Well, my lord ?—

Vic. Evadne, stay !—

Evad. Vicentio !

(With a look of reproaching remonstrance.)

Vic. Let me look in thy face—
 Oh ! 'tis impossible !—I was bemocked,
 And cheated by that villain !—nothing false
 Sure ever looked like thee, and yet wilt thou
 But swear——

Evad. What should I swear ?—

Vic. That you did not
 Betray me to the king.

Evad. Never !—

Vic. Nor e'er
 Didst write in love to him ! [centio,

Evad. Oh ! never, never !—I perceive, Vi-
 Some villain hath abused thy credulous ear—
 But no !—I will not now inquire it of thee—
 When I am calmer—I must hence betimes,
 To chase these blots of sorrow from my face,—
 For if Colonna should behold me weep,
 So tenderly he loves me, that I fear
 His hot, tempestuous nature—Why, Vicentio,
 Do you still wrong me with a wildered eye
 That sheds suspicion ?

Vic. I now remember
 Another circumstance, Ludovico
 Did tell me as I came—I do not see
 My picture on her bosom (Aside.)

Evad. Well Vicentio ?

Vic. When I departed hence, about your neck
 I hung my pictured likeness, which mine eyes,
 Made keen by jealous vigilance, perchance
 Desire upon your breast.

Evad. And, is that all ?
 And in such fond and petty circumstance
 Seek you suspicion's nourishment ?—Vicentio,

I must disclose my weakness—here, Vicentio,
I have pillowed your dear image on a heart
You should not have distrusted.

(*She draws the king's picture from her bosom.*)
Here it is——

And now, my lord, suspect me, if you can.

Vic. (Starting.) A horrid phantom, more accursed than e'er

Yet crossed the sleep of frenzy, stares upon
Speak—speak at once— [me—
Or—let it blast thee too.

Evad. Sure some dark spell,
Some fearful witchery; I am struck to ashes,—
Amazement, like the lightning—give it me,
And I will fix it in my very eyes,
Clasp it against my sight—'Tis not Vicentio!—

Vio. It is the king!—

Evad. Oh! do not yield it faith,—
Give not thy senses credence! Oh, Vicentio,
I am confounded, maddened, lost, Vicentio!
Some dæmon paints it on the coloured air—
'Tis not reality that stares upon me!—
Oh! hide it from my sight!—

Vic. Chance has betrayed thee, [fraud,
And saves my periled honour—Here, thou all
Thou mass of painted perjury,—thou woman!—
And now I have done with thee, and pray to
heaven

I ne'er may see thee more—But, hold!—
Recall that wish again—The time will come
When I would look on thee—then, Evadne,
then,

When the world's scorn is on thee, let me see

Thee, old in youth, and bending 'neath the load
 Of sorrow, not of time—then let me see thee,
 And mayest thou, as I pass, lift up thy head
 But once from the sad earth, and then Evadne,
 Look down again for ever ! [Exit, R.H.]

Enter COLONNA, M.D. in time to see Vicentio go off.

*(Evadne at first not perceiving that he is gone,
 and recovering from her stupefaction.)*

Evad. I will swear—

Give it back to me—Oh ! I am innocent !

*(She rushes up to Colonna, who advances to
 R.H. mistaking him for a moment for Vi-
 centio.)*

By heaven, I am innocent !

Col. Who dares to doubt it,—

Who knows thee of that noble family
 That cowardice in man, or wantonness
 In woman never tarnished ?—

Evad. He is gone !— *(Aside.)*

Col. But how is this, Evadne ? In your face
 I read a wildered air has ta'en the place
 Of that placidity that used to shine
 For ever on thy holy countenance.

Evad. Now, as I value my Vicentio's life—

Col. One of love's summer clouds, I doubt me,
 sister,
 Hath floated o'er you, tho' 'twere better far
 That it had left no rain drops.—What has hap-
 pened ?

Evad. There's nothing has befallen, only—

Col. What, only ?

Evad. I pray your pardon me—I must begone!

Col. Evadne, stay! let me behold you well—
Why do you stand at distance? nearer still,
Evadne!—

Evad. Well?

Col. Vicentio—

Evad. (*Assuming an affected lightness of manner.*)
Why, Colonna—

Think you that I'm without my sex's arts,
And did not practise all the torturings
That make a woman's triumph?

Col. 'Twas not well.

I hoped thee raised above all artifice
That makes thy sex but infancy matured.
I was at first inclined to follow him,
And ask what this might mean?

Evad. Then he had told
That I had played the tyrant.—Had you seen
How like my peevish lap-dog he appeared
Just beaten with a fan.—Ha! ha! Colonna,
You will find us all alike.—Ha! ha! my heart
Will break. (*Bursts into tears.*)

Col. Farewell!

Evad. What would you do?

Col. Let all the world
Hold me a slave, and hoard upon my head
Its gathered infamy—be all who bear
Colonna's name scorn-blighted—may disgrace
Gnaw off all honour from my family,
If I permit an injury to thee
To 'scape Colonna's vengeance!—

Evad. Hold, my brother!
I will not leave thy sight!

Col. Then follow me,
 And if thou art abandoned, after all
 Vicentio's plighted faith, thou shalt behold—
 By heavens, an emperor should not do thee
 wrong,
 Or if he did, tho' I had a thousand lives,
 I had given them all to avenge thee.—I'll inquire
 Into this business ; and if I find
 Thou hast lost a lover, I will give him proof,
 I've my right arm, and thou thy brother still.
[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Naples ;—the front of
 Olivia's House*, R.H.D.F.

Enter LUDOVICO and VICENTIO, L.H.

Lud. There is Olivia's house !

Vic. Thou hast resolved me.

I thank thee for thy counsel, and at once
(*Crosses to R.H.*)
 Speed to its dreadful performance.
(*He raps R.H.D.F.*)

Enter a SERVANT, R.H.D.F.

'Bides the lady Olivia in her home ?

Serv. She does, my lord. [Exit, R.H.D.F.]

Vic. Farewell, Ludovico ! thou seest, my friend,
For such I ever hold thee, that I pass
The stream of destiny. Thou sayest, Ludovico,
'Tis necessary for my fame.

Lud. No less.—

By marrying Olivia you disperse
The noises that abroad did sully you,
Of having given consent to play the cloak
To the king's dalliance.

Vic. Oh, speak of it
No more, Ludovico—farewell, my friend,
I will obey your counsels.—[Exit into Olivia's

Lud. Fare you well, [house.
My passionate, obsequious instrument,
Whom now I scorn so much, I scarcely let thee
Reach to the dignity of being hated.

Enter the KING, L.H. disguised.

King. My faithful servant, my Ludovico !

Lud. My prince ! I did not hope to meet you
here !

What, in this masqued attire, has made you veil
The dazzling brightness of your royalty,
And led you from your palace ?

King. I have ta'en
Concealment's wonted habit, to escape
The hundred eyes of curiosity,
And, wearied with the rotatory course
Of dull unchanging pleasure, sought for thee.
Shall she be mine, Ludovico ?

Lud. My liege,

I marvel not at the impatient throb
Of restless expectation in your heart.
And know, my liege, that not in vain I toil,
To waft you to her bosom, for Vicentio
Renounces her for ever! and but moved
By my wise counsels, hath already prayed
The fair Olivia's hand.

King. How, my Ludovico,
Didst thou accomplish it?

Lud. I turned to use
The passion of Olivia; while Evadne traced
A letter to Vicentio, suddenly
The news of his expected coming reached
Her panting breast, and in the rush of joy,
Unfinished on her table did she leave
The page of amorous wishes, which the care
Of unperceived Olivia, haply seized,
And bore unto my hand.—Vicentio's name
Was drowned in hurried vocatives of love,
As thus—"My lord—my life—my soul,"—the
which

I made advantage of, and did persuade him
'Twas written to your highness,—and with lights
Caught from the very torch of truest love,
I fired the furies' brands—

King. My faithful friend!

Lud. Then with your picture did Olivia work
Suspicion into frenzy—when he came
From your Evadne's house, I threw myself,
As if by fortune, in his path:—I urged
His heated passions to my purposes,
And bade him ask Olivia's hand, to prove
How much he scorned her falsehood.—Even now

He makes his suit, for there Olivia dwells,
And as you came, he entered.

King. But wherein
Will this promote the crowning of my love?

Lud. I said Colonna's self should be the first
To lead you to her arms—

King. Thou didst, Ludovico,
The which perform'd, I'll give thee half my
realm. *(Crosses to R.H.)*

Lud. (Aside.) You shall give all!

King. Accomplish this, my friend,
Thou art my great Apollo!

Lud. No, my liege,
You shall be Jove, and in her arms to-night,
Will taste more joys than the Olympian did
In golden showers in Danaë's yielding heart—

King. Ludovico, thou art as dear to me
As the rich circle of my royalty.
Farewell, Ludovico, I shall expect
Some speedy tidings from thee—fare thee well!
To-night, Ludovico. *[Exit, R.H.]*

Lud. To-night, you perish!
Colonna's dagger shall let out your blood,
And lance your wanton, and high-swelling veins.—
That I should stoop to such an infamy!
Evadne here!

Enter EVADNE, L.H.

Not for the king, but for myself I mean,
A feast fit for the gods!

Evad. (With some agitation.) My Lord Ludovico—

Lud. The beautiful Evadne !
What would the brightest maid of Italy
Of her poor servant ?

Evad. Sir, may I entreat
Your knowledge where the Count Vicentio
'Bides at this present instant ? I have been in-
He 'companied you here. [formed

Lud. It grieves me sore
He hath done you so much wrong.

Evad. What may you mean ?

Lud. 'Tis talked of in the whispering gallery,
Where envy holds her court : [like
Who would have thought Vicentio's heart was
A play-thing stuck with Cupid's lightest plumes
Thus to be tossed from one heart to another ?
Or rather, who had thought that you were made
For such abandonment ?

Evad. I scarce can guess—

Lud. I did not mean to touch so nice a wound.
If you desire to learn where now he 'bides,
I can inform you.

Evad. Where, Ludovico ?

Lud. Yonder, Evadne, in Olivia's house.

Evad. Olivia's house ? what would he there ?

Lud. You know
Vicentio and Olivia are to-day—

Evad. My lord ?

Lud. Are to be married—

Evad. Married, my lord ?
Vicentio and Olivia to be married ?—

Lud. I am sorry that it moves you thus—

Evadne ;

Had I been used as that ingrate, be sure

I ne'er had proved like him—I would not thus
Have flung thee like a poppy from my heart,
A drowsy sleep-provoking flower :—Evadne,
I had not thus deserted you ! [Exit, R.H.]

Evad. Vicentio,

Olivia and Vicentio to be married ?
I heard it—yes—I am sure I did—Vicentio !
Olivia to be married !—and Evadne,
Whose heart was made of adoration—
Vicentio in her house ? there—underneath
That woman's roof—behind the door that looks
To shut me out from hope.—I will myself—
(*Advancing, then checking herself.*)
I do not dare to do it—but he could not—
He could not use me thus—he could not.—Ha !

Enter VICENTIO, from Olivia's house, R.H.D.F.

Vic. Evadne here ?

Evad. Would I had been born blind,
Not to behold the fatal evidence
Of my abandonment !—Am I condemned
Even by the ocular proof, to be made sure
That I'm a wretch for ever !—

Vic. (*Advances R.H.*) Does she come
To bate me with reproaches ? or does she dare
To think that she can angle me again
To the vile pool wherein she meant to catch me ?
I'll pass her with the bitterness of scorn,
Nor seem to know her present to my sight.

(*Crosses to L.H. and passes Evadne.*)

Now I am least revenged. (*Going, L.H.*)

Evad. My lord, I pray you—
My lord, I dare entreat—*Vicentio*—

Vic. Who calls upon *Vicentio*? Was it you?
What would you with him, for I bear the name.

Evad. Sir, I—

Vic. Go on.—I'll taunt her to the quick.—(*Aside.*)

Evad. My lord, I—

Vic. I pray you speak—I cannot guess
By such wild broken phrase what you would have
Of one who knows you not.

Evad. Not know me?

Vic. No—

Let me look in your face—there is indeed
Some faint resemblance to a countenance
Once much familiar to *Vicentio's* eyes,
But 'tis a shadowy one;—she that I speak of
Was full of virtues as the milky way
Upon a frozen night is thick with stars.
She was as pure as an untasted fountain,
Fresh as an April blossom, kind as love,
And good as infants giving charity!—
Such was *Evadne*:—fare you well!

Evad. My lord,
Is't true what I've heard?—

Vic. What have you heard?

Evad. Speak—are you to be married—let
me hear it—

Thank heav'n I've strength to hear it.

Vic. I scarce guess
What interest you find in one that deems
Himself a stranger to you.

Evad. Sir—

Vic. But if

You are indeed solicitous to learn
Aught that imports me, learn that I to-day
Have asked the fair Olivia's hand, in place of
one—

Evad. You have bedewed with tears, and that
henceforth
Will feel no lack of tears, though they may fall
From other eyes than yours.—So then, Vicentio,
Fame did not wrong you.—You are to be mar-
ried?—

Vic. To one within whose heart as pure a fire
As in the shrine of Vesta long has burned.
Not the course flame of a corrupted heart,
To every worship dedicate alike,
A false perfidious seeming.—

Evad. I implore you
To spare your accusations.—I am come—

Vic. Doubtless to vindicate yourself.—

Evad. Oh, no!—

An angel now would vainly plead my cause
Within Vicentio's heart—therefore, my lord,
I have no intent to interrupt the rite
That makes that lady yours; but I am come
Thus breathless as you see me—would to heav'n
I could be tearless too!—you will think, perhaps,
That 'gainst the trembling fearfulness I sin,
That best becomes a woman, and that most
Becomes a sad abandoned one.—

Vic. Evadne—

Evadne, you deceive yourself.

Evad. I knew

I should encounter this—

But I will endure it—nay, more, my lord,

Hear all the vengeance I intend.—

Vic. Go on.—

[maid

Evad. May you be happy with that happier
That never could have loved you more than I do,
But may deserve you better!—May your days,
Like a long stormless summer, glide away,
And peace and trust be with you!—
And when at last you close your gentle lives,
Blameless as they were blessed, may you fall
Into the grave as softly, as the leaves
Of two sweet roses on an autumn eve,
Beneath the soft sighs of the western wind,
Drop to the earth together!—for myself—
I will but pray—(*Sobbing.*)—I will but pray, my
lord. [regain

Vic. (*Aside.*) I must begone, else she may soon
A mastery o'er my nature.

Evad. Oh, Vicentio,
I see that I am doomed a trouble to you.
I shall not long be so.
There's but one trouble I shall ever give
To any one again. I will but pray
The maker of the lonely beds of peace
To open one of his deep hollow ones,
Where misery goes to sleep, and let me in;—
If ever you chance to pass beside my grave,
I am sure you'll not refuse a little sigh,
And if my friend, (I still will call her so)
My friend, Olivia, chide you, pr'ythee tell her
Not to be jealous of me in my grave.

Vic. The picture! in your bosom—near your
heart—

There on the very swellings of your breast,

'The very shrine of chastity, you raised
A foul and cursed idol ! [moment

Evad. You did not give me time—no—not a
To think what villainy was wrought to make me
So hateful to your eyes.—It is too late,
You are Olivia's, I have no claim to you—
You have renounced me—

Vic. Come, confess—confess—

Evad. What then should I confess? that you,
that heaven,
That all the world seem to conspire against me,
And that I am accursed.—But let me hold—
I waste me in the selfishness of woe,
While life perchance is periled.—Oh, Vicentio,
Prithee avoid Colonna's sight !

Vic. Evadne ?—

You do not think to frighten me with his name ?

Evad. Vicentio, do not take away from me
All that I've left to love in all the world !
Avoid Colonna's sight to-day.—Vicentio,
Only to-day avoid him,—I will find
Some way to reconcile him to my fate—
I'll lay the blame upon my hapless head !—
Only to-day, Vicentio.

Enter COLONNA, R.H.S.E.

Col. (R.H.) Ha ! my sister !
Where is thy dignity ? Where is the pride
Meet for Colonna's sister ?—hence !—My lord—

Vic. (L.H.) What would you, sir ?

Col. Your life :—you are briefly answered.
Look here, sir,---To this lady you preferred

Your despicable love ! Long did you woo,
 And when at last by constant adoration,
 Her sigh revealed that you were heard, you
 gained [more—
 Her brother's cold assent.—Well then—no
 For I've no patience to repeat by cause
 The wrong that thou hast done her. It has
 reached

Colonna's ear that you have abandoned her—
 It rings thro' Naples, my good lord—now, mark
 I am her brother— [me—

Vic. Well—

Evad. (*In centre.*) Forbear ! forbear !
 I have no injury you should resent
 In such a fearful fashion.—I—my brother—
 I am sure I never uttered a complaint
 Heaved with one sigh, nor shed a single tear.
 Look at me, good Colonna !—now, Colonna
 Can you discern a sorrow in my face ?
 I do not weep—I do not—look upon me—
 Why I can smile, Colonna. (*Bursts into tears.*)
 Oh ! my brother !—

Col. You weep, Evadne ! but I'll mix your tears
 With a false villain's blood.—If you have left
 A sense of aught that's noble in you still—

Vic. My lord, you do mistake, if you have hope
 Vicentio's name was e'er designed to be
 The cloak of such vile purpose—

Col. How ? explain—
 I understand you not.

Evad. Forbear, Colonna ;
 Before your face, and in the face of heaven,
 I do resign him ;—I forgive him,

And may heaven follow my example too !

Col. But I will not, Evadne.—I shall deal
In briefest phrase with you.—Is't true, my lord,
You have abandoned her ?

Vic. Is't true, my lord,
That to the king—

Col. The king ?

Vic. And could you think
That I am to be made an instrument
For such a foul advancement ? do you think
That I would turn my name into a cloak ?—

Evad. Colonna, my dear brother. Oh, Vi-
centio !

My love, my life, my—pardon me, my lord,
I had forgot—I have no right to use
Words that were once familiar to my lips :
But, for heaven's sake, I do implore you here—

Col. Sir, you said something, if I heard aright,
Touching the king ;—explain yourself.

Vic. I will !

I will not wed his mistress !

Evad. (*With reproach.*) Oh, Vicentio !

Col. Whom mean you, sir ?

Vic. Look there !

Col. Evadne ! ha ?

Vic. Evadne !

Col. (*Crosses to centre, and strikes him with
his glove.*) Here's my answer ! follow
me !

Beyond the city's gates, I shall expect you.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Evad. (*Clinging to Vicentio, who has his sword
drawn, and kneeling to him.*) You shall
not stir !

Vic. If from his heart I poured
A sea of blood, it would not now content me.
Insolent villain ! dost thou stay me back ?
Away ! unloose me !

Evad. Olivia, hear me—listen to my cry—
It is thy husband's life that now I plead for ;
Save, oh, save him ! [! am free,

Vic. Then must I fling thee from me.—Now
And swift as lightning on the whirlwind's wings,
I rush to my revenge ! [Exit, L.H.

Evad. (*Who has fallen upon her knees in her
struggle with Vicentio.*) Oh ! my poor
heart !

Choak not, thou struggling spirit, in my breast,
Hear me, Olivia !—Olivia, hear me !

Enter OLIVIA from her house, M.D.

Oliv. (R.H.) Is't Evadne calls
Like one that with a frantic energy
In fire cries out for life ?

Evad. (L.H.) I cry for life—
Vicentio's life—Colonna's life—Olivia,
I beg thee to preserve him !

Oliv. Whom dost talk of ?

Evad. You have power o'er him that I no
more possess,
Had he e'er loved me as he loves thee now,
I had been stronger when around his neck
I flung me to preserve him.—Oh, my friend !
Colonna, maddened at my miseries,
And I confess that I am miserable,
Hath vowed a horrid vengeance, and even now
He smote Vicentio !

Oliv. Heaven!

Evad. I pri'thee, look not
Misdoubtingly upon me—
Hast thou not wings to save him?

Oliv. Thou art avenged, Evadne!—To himself
I dare not own it—but to thee reveal
The vileness I have practised.

Evad. Speak!

Oliv. In the wild rapturous tremor of thy joy,
I seized advantage of Vicentio's coming,
And placed within thine unsuspecting hand—

Evad. That horrid image that appeared to fill
My bosom with perdition, and did make me
Unto myself so horrible—'twas you—
It was my friend Olivia!

Oliv. I myself,
Will to the king, and bid him send his power
To interpose between them—thou, Evadne,
Wilt speak my guilt. [Exit, R.H.]

Evad. Oh, my Vicentio!
I fly to save and comfort you! [Exit, L.H.]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Bay, and View of Naples.*

Enter COLONNA and VICENTIO, L.H. with their swords drawn;—passing across to R.H.

Col. Yonder, my lord, beside the cypress grove [thinks,
Fast by the church-yard—there's a place, me—
Where we may 'scape the eye of observation.

Vic. I follow, sir—the neighbourhood of the grave
Will suit our purpose well, for you or I
Must take its measure ere the sun be set.
[*Exeunt, R.H.*

Enter LUDOVICO, L.H.S.E. as they go off.

Lud. Ha! there they go!—the furies, with
their whips
Of hissing serpents, lash you to your fate—
My dull and passionate fools—you fall at last
Into the pit I have dug for you—the grave.—
You grasp the murdering hilt, while I, in thought,
Already clench the glorious staff of empire.
I hate you both!—One of you has denounced
me—
The other, robbed me of a woman's love.
They have already entered in the grove
Of funeral cypress.—Now they are lost

Amid the crowded trunks—and yet a moment
And they will be about it!—Now, Vicentio,
Thy fate is sealed.—Colonna's arm—
Ha! who comes here?

Evadne!—yes—my eyes deceive me not—
'Twas happiest chance that led me to the field—
She must be interrupted—let me think—
I have it.—

Enter EVADNE, L.H.

Evad. For heaven's sake, whoe'er you are,
Tell me which way they passed—doth not this
lead [vico!

To the eastern gate of the city.—Ha! Ludo—
My lord, my lord—my brother, and Vicentio—

Lud. I know it all—and I shall thank the fate
That made Ludovico the messenger
Of such blest tidings to Evadne's ear—
Your brother and Vicentio.

Evad. Speak, my lord—
For heaven's sake, speak!

Lud. They are secure—thank heaven,
Their purpose is prevented.—

Evad. Secure!
My brother and Vicentio are secure.

Lud. By providential circumstance, before
Their purpose was accomplished, both were
seized,

And all their furious passions are as hushed
As the still waters of yon peaceful bay.

Evad. Ludovico, I cannot speak how much
Thou hast bound me to thee, by the holy sounds

These thanks are from a warm and honest heart.
Farewell—I do forgive——

Lud. You fly me then !

Evad. I do not fly your presence, but I go
To seek my brother's bosom——

Lud. And Vicentio's !

Evad. You would be merry, sir.

Lud. I have not cause——

Nor shall you, madam—You would fly me thus,
To rush at once into my rival's arms——

Nay, do not start—he well deserves the name——
I know him by no other.

Evad. Sir, I hope

You will not revive a subject that has long
Between us been forgotten.

Lud. What ! forgotten ?

I did not think to hear it—said you forgotten ?
Nay, do not think you leave me—in return
For such small service as I have done to-day,
I beg your audience—tell me what's forgotten ?
I would hear it from your lips.

Evad. I did not mean——

Forgive, and let me go. *(Crosses to R.H.)*

Lud. What ? what forgotten ?

Your heartlessness to all the maddening power
Of the tumultuous passions in my heart !—
What ! what forgotten ? all the injuries
You have cast upon my head—the stings of fire
You have driven into my soul—my agonies,
My tears, my supplications, and the groans
Of my indignant spirit ! I can hold
My curbed soul no more—it rushes out !
What ? what forgotten ?—me—Ludovico ?

Evad. I pray you, my good lord, for heaven's sake, hear me.

Lud. What! to behold him, like a pilferer,
With his smooth face of meanless infancy,
And his soft moulded body, steal away
That feathered thing, thy heart.

Evad. Ludovico,
What may this sudden fury mean?—you do
But act these horrid passions to affright me!
For you to-day preserved him, did you not?
Did you not say you saved Vicentio?

Lud. I will permit you shortly to embrace
him—

I will not long detain you from his arms—
But you will find him grown as cold a lover
As moonlight statues—his fond arms will hang
In loosened idleness about your form,— [bibe
And from those lips where you were wont t'im-
The fiery respiration of the heart, [snow,
You will touch the coldness of the unsunned
Without its purity.

Evad. I now perceive [deem
What you would hint, my lord:—doubtless you
Vicentio hath preferred Oliva's love?

Lud. If you can wake his heart to love again,
I'll hold you for a sorceress—no, Evadne,
You ne'er shall be Vicentio's—but mine!

Evad. Yours!

Lud. Mine!—I have said it, and before to-night
I'll verify the prophecy.

Evad. I know not
What lies within the dark and horrid cave
Of your imagination; but be sure

I had rather clasp Vicentio dead—I see
That you recoil with passion.

Lud. By the fires— [rather
Down, down, my burning heart!—So you would
Within Vicentio's cold and mouldering shroud
Warm into love, than on this beating heart?
But, be it so—you will have occasion soon
To try the experiment—and then, Evadne,
You will more aptly judge.

Evad. Ha! a strong glare, [poured
Like the last flash from sinking ships, has
A horrid radiance on me—Ha! Ludovico—
Let it be frenzy that before my face
Spreads out that sheet of blood—

Lud. Well, my Evadne?

Evad. Dæmon, hast thou mocked me?

Lud. Didst thou not scorn—didst thou not
Didst thou not—Ha! [madden me?
(*Seeing Colonna, crosses to R.H.*)

By heavens, it is himself!—

All is accomplished—and upon my front
Methinks I clasp the round of royalty!

Already do I clasp thee in mine arms!—

Evadne!—There—look there—Colonna comes,
(*Crosses to L.H.*)

And on that weapon flaming from afar

He bears the vengeance of Ludovico. [*Exit, L.H.*

Enter COLONNA, R.H., with his sword bloody.

Col. Evadne here!

Evad. My brother!

Col. Call me so—

For I have proved myself to be thy brother.
Look here !—

Evad. There's blood upon it!

Col. And there should be.

Evad. Thou hast—

Col. I have revenged thee!

Evad. Thou hast slain—

Villain, thou hast slain Vicentio?

Col. I have revenged thee—

For any wrong done to my single self,
I should, perhaps, repent me of the deed;
But, for a wrong to thee—Why dost thou look
Up to the heavens with such a bewildered gaze?

Evad. To curse thee, and myself, and all the
world! [slain him

Villain, thou hast slain Vicentio !—thou hast
Who was as dear unto my frantic heart,
As thou art horrible !—and 'tis to me
Thou comest to tell it too—thou comest to bear
'That weapon weltering with my lover's blood,
And stab these blasted eye-balls—Hide thee,
villain!

Hide thee within the centre of the earth !—
Thou art all made of blood—and to the sun [tio!
Art grown detestable—(*Crosses to R.H.*)—Vicen-
My lord! my bosom's throb !—my pulse of life!
My soul! my joy—my love !—my all the
Vicentio! Vicentio !— (*Crosses to L.H.*) [world!

Col. Thy passionate grief

Doth touch me more than it beseems mine
honour. [my heart!

Evad. Strike that infernal weapon through
Colonna, kill me!
Kill me, my brother!

Col. Prithee, my Evadne,
 Let me conduct thy grief to secrecy—
 I must from hence prepare my speedy flight,
 For now my head is forfeit to the law !

Enter SPALATRO, with Officer and eight Guards, R.H.

Spal. Behold him here. Sir, I am sorry for
 The duty which mine office hath prescribed !
 You are my prisoner.

Col. Sir, there is need
 Of little words to excuse you—I was talking
 Of speeding me from Naples, as you came,
 But I scare grieve you interrupt my flight,—
 Here is my sword.

Spal. You are doomed to death !

Evad. To death !

Spal. The king himself,
 Hearing your combat with Vicentio,
 Hath sworn, that who survived, shall by the axe—

Col. You speak before a woman—I was well
 Acquainted with my fate before you spoke it.

Evad. Death ! must you die, Colonna ! must
 you die ?

Oh ! no—no—no ! not die, sir,—say not die—
 (*Crosses to centre.*)

Col. Retire, my sister—sir, I follow you—

Evad. Oh, not die, Colonna ! no Colonna,
 They shall not take thee from me !

Col. My sweet sister !

I pray you, gentlemen, one moment more—
 This lady is my sister, and indeed

Is now my only kin in all the world,
And I must die for her sake—my sweet sister !

Evad. No, no, not die, my brother—Oh ! not die !

Col. Evadne ! sweet Evadne ! Let me hear
(*Evadne becomes gradually insensible.*)

Thy voice before I go—I prithee, speak—
That even in death I may remember me
Of its sweet sounds, Evadne—She has fainted !
Sir, I have a prayer to you.—

Spal. It shall be granted.

Col. My palace is hard by—let some of these
Good guardians of the law attend me thither.
Evadne, for thy sake, I am almost loth
To leave a world, the which, when I am gone,
Thou wilt find, I fear, a solitary one !

[*Exit, bearing Evadne, and followed by Spalatro and Guards, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*A Prison.*

Enter LUDOVICO, R.H. meeting SPALATRO, L.H.

Lud. Where is Colonna ?—Not yet arrived ?

Spal. Guarded he bore
His sister to his palace, from the which
He will be soon led here.—

Lud. Spalatro, as I pass'd, a rumour came,
Colonna's sword had but half done the work,
And that Vicentio was not stabbed to death—
If he still lives—but till I am sure of it,
No need to speak my resolution,—
Thou art his friend—

Spal. Such I'm indeed accounted,
But, save yourself, none doth deserve the name.

Lud. Then, hie thee hence, Spalatro, to inform me,
If yet Vicentio breathes—(*Spalatro crosses to R.H.*)
—and afterwards,
I'll make some trial of thy love to me.

[*Exit Spalatro, R.H.*

Enter COLONNA, OFFICER, and eight Guards, L.H.

Col. Conduct me to my dungeon!—I have parted
From all that bound my bosom to the world—
Ludovico!—

Lud. The same.

Col. Come you, my lord,
To swill with drunken thirst, the poor revenge
That makes a little mind's ignoble joy? [care;

Lud. Guards! I discharge Colonna from your
He is no more your prisoner—Hence!

[*Exeunt Officer and Guards, L.H.*

My lord,
Such is the vengeance of Ludovico! [death

Col. What is a man doomed to the stroke of
To understand by this?

Lud. That I am his friend
Who called me traitor!

Col. Such I call you still.

Lud. Well then, I am a traitor.

Col. There is here
A kind of marvellous honesty, my lord.

Lud. In you 'twas nobleness to bear the charge,
 And yet 'twas glory to deserve it too.
 Your father was the tutor of the king,
 And loyalty is your inheritance—
 I am not blind to such exalted virtue,
 And I resolved to win Colonna's heart,
 As hearts like his are won!—Unto the king
 Soon as Vicentio's fate had reach'd mine ear,
 I hastened and implored your life.

Col. My life!—

Well, sir, my life?— (*With indifference.*)

Lud. Upon my knees I fell,
 Nor can I speak the joy that in my heart—
 Leaped, when I heard him say, that thou shouldst
 live.

Col. I am loth to owe you gratitude, my lord,
 But, for my sister's sake, whom I would not
 Leave unprotected on the earth, I thank you!

Lud. You have no cause to thank me; for,
 Colonna,
 He did pronounce your death, e'en as he said,
 He gave you life.

Col. I understand you not. [hold

Lud. Your honour's death, Colonna, which I
 The fountain of vitality.

Col. Go on!

I scarce did hear what did concern my life,
 But aught that touches honour—

Lud. Oh! Colonna,
 I almost dread to tell thee.

Col. Prithee, speak!
 You put me on the rack!

Lud. Wilt thou promise me,—

I will not ask thee to be calm, Colonna,—
Wilt promise me, that thou wilt not be mad?

Col. Whate'er it be, I will contain myself.
You said 'twas something that concern'd mine
honour,

The honour of mine house—he did not dare
To say my blood should by a foul attaint
Be in my veins corrupted; from their height
The mouldering banners of my family,
Flung to the earth; the 'scutcheons of my fame
'Trod by dishonour's foot, and my great race
Struck from the list of nobles?

Lud. No, Colonna,
Struck from the list of men!—he dared to ask
As a condition for thy life, (my tongue
Doth falter as I speak it, and my heart
Can scarcely heave) by heavens he dared to ask
That, to his foul and impious clasp, thou shouldst
Yield up thy sister—

Col. Ha!

Lud. The king doth set a price
Upon thy life, and 'tis thy sister's honour.

Col. My sister!

Lud. Aye, thy sister!

Col. What!—my sister!

Lud. Yes!--your sister, sir,--Evadne!

Col. By yon heaven,
Tho' he were born with immortality,
I will find some way to kill him!
My sister!

Lud. Do not waste in idle wrath—

Col. My fathers! do you hear it in the tomb?
Do not your mouldering remnants of the earth

Col. That I should
Convert the palace of mine ancestors
Into a place of brothelry—myself!—
Tell me no more, I prithee, if thou wouldst
I should be fit for death!—

Lud. In honour be
A Roman, an Italian in revenge.
Waste not in idle or tempestuous sound
Thy great resolve. The king intends to bear
The honour of his presence to your house,—
Nay, hold!—I'll tell him you consent—he straight
Will fall into the snare, and then, Colonna,
Make offering of his blood to thy revenge!

Col. I thank thee for thy warning—'tis well
thought on—

I'll make my vengeance certain, and commend
Thy wisdom in the counselling.

Lud. Then, hie thee hence!
And make meet preparation for the banquet.
I'll straight return, and tell him you're all joy
In the honour of his coming.

Col. The rigorous muscles of my clenched
hand

Already feel impatience for the blow
That strikes the crowned monster to the heart.

[*Exeunt* ; *Col.* L.H. *Lud.* R.H.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A vast hall in Colonna's palace, filled with statues.—The moon streams in through the gothic windows, and appears to fall upon the statues. A chamber-door at the back.*

Enter LUDOVICO and the KING, R.H.D.

Lud. This is the way, my liege. Colonna
bade me

Conduct you to your chamber, while he went
To seek the fair Evadne, and conduct
Her soft reluctance to your highness' arms.

King. Ludovico, thou hast proved thyself to-day
The genius of my happier destiny :
Thee must I thank, for 'twas thy rarer wit
Did guide me on to heaven.

Lud. I'll send you there. *(Aside.)*

King. When first I heard Vicentio fell beneath
The hot Colonna's sword, I do confess
It smote me sore, but now 'tis told abroad
That he hath passed all peril.

Lud. I am glad
His death doth not conduct you to your joys—
Vicentio bears a slight unharmed wound,
That sheds his blood, but perils not his life :
But let him pass—let not a thought of him
Flit round the couch of love.

King. Good night, my friend,
And prithee, bid Colonna swiftly lead her
'To the expecting transports of my heart.

Lud. I will bid him speed her coyness.

King. Hie thee, Ludovico,
For every moment seems an age.

[*Exit into chamber, M.D.*]

Lud. An age!

For you, nor minute, hour, nor day, nor year,
Nor age, shall shortly be.

'Tis now the dead of night—That sounds to me
Like an apt word,—for nature doth to me
Shew like a giant corse.—This mighty world,
Its wide and highly-vaulted sepulchre,
And yonder moon a tomb-lamp! when the king
Lies dead to boot, all things will then appear
In a more full proportion.—Ha! he comes!
My dull and unconscious instrument!—Colonna!

Enter COLONNA with a dagger, R.H.D.

Welcome, my friend, for such I dare to call you.—
The king's already to his bed retired,
Where death will be his paramour.

Col. I have heard
Vicentio was not wounded unto death—
Would this were sooner known!

Lud. Why, my good lord?

Col. Because the king would not have offered
Such an indignity, nor should I now [me
Tread into murder.

Lud. Murder—I had hoped,
You would not on the threshold of the deed
Stay tottering thus—One would deem
It was a deed of sin, and not of honour,
That you had undertaken.

Col. By yon heaven,
I cannot stab him like a slave that's hired
To be a blood-shedder ! I cannot clench
This hand, accustomed to a soldier's sword,
Around this treacherous hilt, and with the other
Squeeze the choked spirit from the gasping
throat—

Then kneel upon his bosom, and press out
The last faint sigh of life ! Down, damned steel !
Fit instrument for cowards—(*Throws down the
dagger near R.H.*)—I will play
A warrior's part, and arm him for the fight !—
Give me thy sword, that I may put defence
Into the tyrant's hand, and nobly kill him.—
Come forth ! (*Going to D.F.*)

Lud. Hold, madman, hold !—what wouldst
thou do ?

Col. Bravely encounter him—not take his life
Like a mercenary stabber.

Lud. Hast thou thought
That he may be the victor too ?

Col. My death
Will not be thought inglorious.

Lud. There's some praise
In falling by the hand of royalty ;
But when you are laid within your sepulchre,
And rot most honourably, then I fear me,
A lesser shame will not befall your house
For all the graven marbles on your tomb !
Your sister—

Col. Ha !

Lud. Your sister will not find,
When you are dead, a bulwark in your grave,

Where will she find a guardian arm—thine arm
Will be the food of the consuming worm,
While in the hot embraces of the king—

Col. I did not think on that.

Lud. But I perhaps mistake you all this while—
You had better thought upon the dignity
He means your house.

Col. You do not dare—

Lud. I dare to tell you this—
Who can forgive such injury as thine,
Hath half consented to it.—How is it
The glorious resolve hath cooled within thee?
Hath any thing befallen that should have blown
On the red iron of thy heated wrath,
And steeped thee back to meekness?—Was the
touch

Of his warm amorous hand, wherein he palmed
Her struggling fingers, ice upon your rage?
When he did tread upon her yielding foot
Beneath the cloth of gold——

Col. If I had seen it,
He had not lived an instant!

Lud. When you turned,
He flung his arms around, and on her cheek
He pressed his ravenous lips!—'Sdeath, sir,
consider—

You pray the King of Naples to your roof,—
You hail his coming in a feast that kings
Could scarce exceed in glory—It is blown
Thro' all the city that he sleeps to-night
Within your sister's bed; and, it is said,
That you, yourself, have smoothed the pillow
down.

Col. Where is he? let me see him who pre-
To think the blasphemy. [sumes

Lud. Behold him here!

I sir—yes, I—Ludovico, dare think
With every man in Naples, if the king
Should leave your roof with life, that he has
The fruit he came to pluck. [tasted

Col. No more—no more—
He perishes, Ludovico!

Lud. That's well—

I am glad to see you pull into your heart
(*Crosses and takes up the dagger.*)

Its brave resolve again—and if there be
Aught wanting to confirm thee, think, Colonna,
Think that you give your country liberty,
While you revenge yourself!—Go, my Colonna—
Yonder's the fated chamber—plunge the steel
(*Gives the dagger to Colonna.*)

Into his inmost heart, and let the blood
Flow largely.

Col. I'll call to thee when it is done. [know

Lud. Hark thee! he'll cry for life—and well I
The pleading for existence may have power
Upon thy noble nature—then, Colonna,
Drown every shriek with chaste Evadne's name,
And stab him as thou criest it! [*Exit, R.H.D.*

(*Colonna advances towards the chamber-door
in centre.*)

Col. I will do it!—

(*He pushes the door, and finds, from his agi-
tated condition it is difficult to move.*)

I can scarce move the door—it will not yield!
It seems as if some mighty hand were laid
Against it to repel me.

(*Voice exclaims, L.H.U.E.*) Hold !

Col. (*Starting.*) It was only [me—
My thought informed the air with voice around
Why should I feel as if I walked in guilt
And trod to common murder—he shall die !
Come then, enraging thought, into my breast
And turn it into iron !

(*Voice, L.H.U.E.*) Hold !

Col. It shot
With keen reality into mine ear.
A figure in the shadow of the moon,
Moves slowly on my sight.
What art thou ?

EVADNE *advances, L.H.U.E. from behind the Statues.*

Evad. My brother !

Col. How, my sister !
Come you across my purpose ?

Evad. From my chamber
That to the great hall leads, I did behold you,
In dreadful converse with Ludovico.—
Your looks at the banquet did unto my fears
Forbode no blessed issue, for your smiles [brows
Seemed veils of death, and underneath your
I saw the silent furies—Oh, Colonna,—
Thank heaven, the safety of Vicentio [steps !
Has given me power to watch your dangerous
What would you do ?

Col. Get thee to rest.

Evad. Is that high front, Colonna,
One to write Cain upon ?—Alas, Colonna,
I did behold you with Ludovico,

By yonder moon, and I as soon had seen thee
Commune with the great foe of all mankind—
What wouldst thou do ?

Col. Murder !

Evad. What else, Colonna,
Couldst thou have learned from Ludovico ?

Col. In yonder chamber lies the king—I go
To stab him to the heart !

Evad. 'Tis nobly done !
I will not call him king—but guest, Colonna—
Remember, you have called him here—remem-
ber [cup ;
You have pledged him in your father's golden
Have broken bread with him—the man, Co-
lonna,——

Col. Who dares to set a price upon my life—
What think'st thou 'twas ?

Evad. I think there's nought too dear
To buy Colonna's life.

Col. 'Twas a vast price
He asked me then—you were to pay it too—
It was my Evadne's honour.

Evad. Ha ! [sister,

Col. He gives my life upon condition—Oh, my
I am ashamed to tell thee what he asked.

Evad. What ! did he ?—

Col. Thou dost understand me now ?—
Now—if thou wilt, abide thee here, Evadne,
Where thou mayest hear his groan. (*Going in.*)

Evad. Forbear, Colonna !
For heaven's sake, stay—this was the price he
asked thee ?

He asked thee for thy life ?—*thy* life ?—but, no ;
Vicentio lives, and——

Col. (Aside.) How is this? She seems
To bear too much of woman in her heart;
She trembles—yet she does not shrink—her
cheek

Is not inflamed with anger, and her eye
Darts not the lightning!—

Evad. Oh! my dearest brother,
Let not this hand, this pure, this white fair hand,
Be blotted o'er with blood.

Col. (Aside.) Why, is it possible,
She has ta'en the sinful wish into her heart?
By heaven, her pride is dazzled at the thought
Of having this same purple villain kneel,
And bend his crown before her—She's a woman!
Evadne!

Evad. Well?

Col. The king expects me to
Conduct you to his chamber—Shall I do so?

Evad. I prithee, be not angry at my prayer—
But bid him come to me.

Col. What! bid him come to thee?

Evad. And leave me with him here.

Col. What! leave thee with him?

Evad. Yes—I implore it of thee—prithee,
Conduct my sovereign here. [Colonna,

Col. Yes—I will try her—

I know not what she means, but, hitherto,
I deemed her virtuous. If she fall, she dies.

I'll here conceal myself, and if in word
She give consent, I'll rush upon them both
And strike one heart thro' the other.—(*Aside.*)

Evad. Send him to me. [eye—

Col. There's a wild purpose in her solemn

I know not if 'tis sin, but I will make
 A terrible experiment.—(*Aside.*)—What, ho !
 My liege, I bear fulfilment of my promise—
 Colonna bears Evadne to your arms !

Enter the KING from the chamber, M.D.

King. Colonna, my best friend, how shall I
 thank thee ?

But where is my Evadne ?

Col. There, my lord !

King. Colonna, I not only give thee life,
 But place thee near myself; henceforth thou
 wilt wear

A nobler title in thy family,—
 And to thy great posterity we'll send
 My granted dukedom.

Col. Sir you honour me.

My presence is no longer needed here.

(*Aside.*)—A word's consent despatches them !

(*Conceals himself behind the pillars, R.H.U.E.*)

King. My fair Evadne ! lay aside thy sad
 And drooping aspect in this hour of joy !
 Stoop not thy head, that like a pale rose bends
 Upon its yielding stalk—thou hast no cause
 For such a soft abashment, for be sure
 I'll place thee high in honour.

Evad. (L.H.) Honour, sir !—

King. (R.H.) Yes ; I'll exalt thee into dignity,
 Adorn thy name with titles—All my court
 Shall watch the movement of thy countenance,
 Riches and power shall wait upon thy smile.

And in the lightest-bending of thy brow
Death and disgrace inhabit.

Evad. And, my liege,
That will inhabit my own heart!

King. My love!
Come, my Evadne—what a form is here?
The imaginers of beauty did of old
O'er three rich forms of sculptured excellence
Scatter the naked graces; but the hand
Of mightier nature hath in thee combined
All varied charms together.

Evad. You were speaking
Of sculpture, sir—I do remember me,
You are deemed a worshipper of that high art,
Here, my lord, *(Pointing to the statues.)*
Is matter for your transports!

King. Fair Evadne!
Do you not mean to mock me? Not to gaze
On yonder lifeless marbles did I come
To visit you to-night, but in the pure,
And blue-veined alabaster of a breast,
Richer than heaves the Parian that has wed
The Florentine to immortality. *[mood,*

Evad. You deem me of a light capricious
But it were hard if, (woman as I am)
I could not use my sex's privilege—
Tho' I should ask you for yon orb of light,
That shines so brightly, and so sadly there,
And fills the ambient air with purity—
Should you not fain, as 'tis the wont of those
Who cheat a wayward child, to draw it down,
And in the sheeted splendour of a stream

To catch its shivering brightness!—It is my
pleasure

That you should look upon these reverend forms,
That keep the likeness of mine ancestry—

I must enforce you to it !—

King. Wayward woman !

What arts does she intend to captivate
My soul more deeply in her toils ?

Evad. Behold ! (*Going to a statue, R.H.S.E.*)

The glorious founder of my family !

It is the great Rodolpho !—Charlemagne

Did fix that sun upon his shield, to be

His glory's blazoned emblem ; for at noon,

When the astronomer cannot discern

A spot upon the full-orbed disk of light,

'Tis not more bright than his immaculate name !

With what austere, and dignified regard

He lifts the type of purity, and seems

Indignantly to ask, if aught that springs

From blood of his, shall dare to sully it

With a vapour of the morning !

King. It is well ;

His frown has been attempered in the lapse

Of generations, to thy lovely smile.—

I swear, he seems not of thy family.

My fair Evadne, I confess, I hoped

Another sort of entertainment here.

Evad. Another of mine ancestors, my liege—

(*Pointing to a statue, L.H.U.E.*)

Guelfo the murderer !

King. The murderer !

I knew not that your family was stained

With the reproach of blood.

Evad. We are not wont
 'To blush, tho' we may sorrow for his sin,
 If sin indeed it be. His castle walls
 Were circled by the siege of Saracens,—
 He had an only daughter whom he prized
 More than you hold your diadem; but when
 He saw the fury of the infidels [child
 Burst through his shattered gates, and on his
 Dishonour's hand was lifted, with one blow
 He struck her to the heart, and with the other,
 He stretched himself beside her.

King. Fair Evadne,
 I must no more indulge you, else I fear
 You would scorn me for my patience; prithee,
 No more of this wild phantasy! [love,

Evad. My liege, [upon it,
 But one remains, and when you have looked
 And thus complied with my request, you will
 find me

Submissive to your own. Look here, my lord,—
 Know you this statue?

(*Pointing to a statue, L.H.S.E.*)

King. No, in sooth, I do not. [ill

Evad. Nay—look again—for I shall think but
 Of princely memories, if you can find
 Within the inmost chambers of your heart
 No image like to this—look at that smile—
 That smile, my liege—look at it!

King. It is your father!

Evad. (*Breaking into exultation.*)
 Aye!—'tis indeed my father!—'tis my good,
 Exalted, generous, and god-like father!
 Whose memory, though he had left his child

A naked, houseless roamer through the world,
 Were an inheritance a princess might
 Be proud of for her dower!

Who was my father?

(With a proud and conscious interrogatory.)

King. One, whom I confess
 Of high and many virtues.

Evad. Is that all?

I will help your memory, and tell you first,
 That the late King of Naples looked among
 The noblest in his realm for that good man,
 To whom he might intrust your opening youth,
 And found him worthiest. In the eagle's nest
 Early he placed you, and beside his wing
 You learned to mount to glory! Underneath
 His precious care you grew, and were once
 Thought grateful for his service. His whole life
 Was given to your uses, and his death—
 Ha! do you start, my lord? On Milan's plain
 He fought beside you, and when he beheld
 A sword thrust at your bosom, rushed—it pierced
 him!

He fell down at your feet,—he did, my lord!
 He perished to preserve you!—(*Rushes to the
 statue.*)—Breathless image,
 Altho' no heart doth beat within that breast,
 No blood is in those veins, let me enclasp thee,
 And feel thee at my bosom.—Now, sir, I am
 ready— me!—

Come and unloose these feeble arms, and take
 Aye, take me from this neck of senseless stone,—
 And to reward the father with the meet
 And wonted recompense that princes give—

Make me as foul as bloated pestilence,
As black as darkest midnight, and as vile
As guilt and shame can make me.

King. She has smitten
Compunction thro' my soul !

Evad. Approach, my lord !
Come in the midst of all mine ancestry,
Come and unloose me from my father's arms—
Come, if you dare, and in his daughter's shame
Reward him for the last drops of the blood
Shed for his prince's life !—

King. Thou hast wrought
A miracle upon thy prince's heart,
And lifted up a vestal lamp, to shew
My soul its own deformity—my guilt !

Evad. (*Disengaging herself from the statue.*)

Ha ! have you got a soul ?—have you
yet left,

Prince as you are, one relic of a man ?
Have you a soul ?—he trembles—he relents—
I read it in the glimmering of his face ;
And there's a tear, the bursting evidence
Of nature's holy working in the heart !
Oh, heav'n ! he weeps ! my sovereign, my liege
Heart ! do not burst in ecstasy too soon !
My brother ! my Colonna !—hear me—hear !
In all the wildering triumph of my soul,
I call upon thee !

(*Turning, she perceives Colonna advancing
from among the statues, R.H.U.E.*)

There he is—my brother !

Col. (*In centre.*) Let me behold thee,

Let me compress thee here!—Oh! my dear sister!

A thousand times mine own!—I glory in thee,
More than in all the heroes of my name!—
I overheard your converse, and methought
It was a blessed spirit that had ta'en
Thy heavenly form, to shew the wondering world
How beautiful was virtue!—Sir,— (*To the king.*)

Evad. (L.H.) Colonna,
There is your king!

Col. Thou hast made him so again!
Thy virtue hath recrowned him—and I kneel
His faithful subject here!

King. (R.H.) Arise, Colonna!
You take the attitude that more befits
The man who would have wrong'd you, but
whose heart,
Was by a seraph call'd again to heaven!
Forgive me!

Col. Yes, with all my soul I do!
And I will give you proof how suddenly
You are grown my prince again.—Do not inquire
What I intend, but let me lead you here
Behind these statues.—

(*Places the king behind the statues, R.H.U.E.*)
Retire, my best Evadne! [*Exit Evadne, L.H.*]
Ho! Ludovico!
What ho! there!—Here he comes!

Enter LUDOVICO, R.H.D.

Ludovico,
I have done the deed.—

Lud. He is dead ?

Col. Thro' his heart

E'en as thou badest me, did I drive the steel,
And as he cried for life, Evadne's name
Drowned his last shriek !

Lud. So !

Col. Why, Ludovico,
Stand you thus rapt ? Why does your bosom heave
In such wild tumult ? Why is it you place
Your hand upon your front ? What hath possess-
ed you ?

Lud. (*With a strong laugh of irony*) Fool !

Col. How is this ?

Lud. So, thou hast slain the king ?

Col. I did but follow your advice, my lord.

Lud. Therefore, I call ye—fool !—From the
king's head [own !

Thou hast ta'en the crown, to place it on mine
Therefore I touched my front, for I did think
That palpably, I felt the diadem
Wreathing its golden round about my brow !
But, by yon heaven, scarce do I feel more joy
In climbing up to empire than I do
In knowing thee my dupe !

Col. I know, my lord,
You bade me kill the king.

Lud. And since thou hast slain him,
Know more—'twas I that first within his heart
Lighted impurity ;—'twas I, Colonna,—
Hear it—'twas I that did persuade the king
To ask thy sister's honour, as the price
Of thine accorded life !

Col. You ?—

Lud. Would'st hear more ?—

To-morrow sees me king ! I have already
Prepared three thousand of my followers
To call me to the throne—and when I am there,
I'll try thee for the murdering of the king,—
And then—What ho, there ! Guards !—then, my
 good lord,
When the good trenchant axe hath struck away
'That dull, and passionate head of thine—What
 ho !—

Enter Officer and eight Guards, R.H.D.

I'll take the fair Evadne to mine arms,
And thus—
On yonder traitor seize !—
With sacrilegious hand he has ta'en away
The consecrated life of majesty,
And—

The KING comes forward in centre, R.H.U.E.

What do I behold ? is not my sense
Mocked with this horrid vision ?
That hath started up
To make an idiot of me ;—is it not
The vapour of the senses that has framed
The only spectacle that ever yet
Appalled Ludovico ?

King. Behold thy king !

Lud. He lives !—I am betrayed—but let me not
Play traitor to myself :—befriend me still
Thou guarding genius of Ludovico !

My liege, my royal master, do I see you
Safe from the plots of yon accursed traitor?
And throwing thus myself around your knees,
Do I clasp reality?

King. Traitor, arise!

Nor dare pollute my garment with a touch!
I know thee for a villain!—Seize him, guards!

Lud. (Drawing his sword.) By this right arm
they dare not—this right arm
That to the battle oft hath led them on,
Whose power to kill they know, but would not
feel!—

I am betrayed—but who will dare to leap
Into the pit wherein the lion's caught,
And hug with him for death? Not one of this
Vile herd of trembling wretches! [me,
(*To the King.*) Thou art meet alone to encounter
And thus in the wild bravery of despair,
I rush into thy life!

Col. (Intercepts and stabs him.—Ludovico falls.)

Lud. Colonna, thou hast conquered.

Oh! that I could,
Like an expiring dragon, spit upon you!—
That I could—thus I fling the drops of life
In showers of poison on you—May it fall
Like Centaur-blood, and fester you to madness!
Oh! that I could—(*He grasps his sword, and, in
an effort to rise, dies.*)

Enter EVADNE, L.H. and crosses to COLONNA.

Evad. Oh! my brother! [prince!

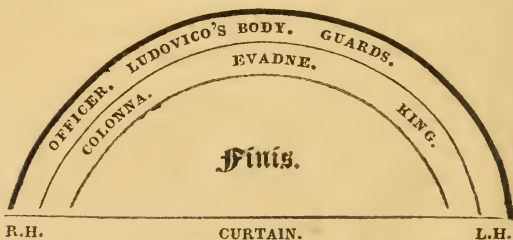
King. Thou hast a second time preserved thy

Fair Evadne,
We will repair our injuries to thee,
And wait in all the pomp of royalty
Upon the sacred day that gives thy hand
To thy beloved Vicentio!

Col. And the nuptials
Shall at the pedestal be solemnized
Of our great father!

Evad. And ever, as in this blest moment, may
His guardian spirit, with celestial love
Spread its bright wings to shelter us from ill,
With nature's tenderest feelings looking down
Benignant on the fortunes of his child!

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



Epilogue,

SPOKEN BY MRS. FAUCIT.

DROP SCENE.—*The Hall of Dramatic Statues.*

SENT hither by our bard, no pleasant jaunt—
In epilogue a timorous debutante,
I ask your favour, like a prudent elf,
One word for him, and one word for myself!

Cut off, like Crusoe, from the social walk,
With no man Friday to keep up the talk
Frown'd on by yonder monumental sages—(*Pointing to the
Drop.*)

In marble. What an awful thing the stage is!
Of Thespian bards yon Alpha and Omega,
From mighty Shakspeare down to Lope de Vega;
Each shakes his awful curls, and seems to say,—
“Surely the author means to damn his play;
What! send an actress out, the town t'implore,
Who never spoke an epilogue before!
Olivia for *Eradne*,—mighty clever!
Woman for woman! that is new, however!”

Peace, ye monopolists, on marble shelves,
You want to damn all statues but yourselves.
Avaunt! “I've caught the speaker's eye” before ye,
Rear-rank, attention! while I tell a story.

Pygmalion once, to ape the turner's trade,
With curious labour carved an ivory maid,
But as immortal grace each limb unfolds,
He glows with passion for the maid he moulds,
And cries, (how vain were artists e'en in Greece)
"Come! that's a statue! that's art's masterpiece!"
Long he adores her with a lover's mien,
And thus, at length, petitions beauty's queen;
"Oh, Venus, bid me taste of Hymen's bliss,
And 'bone of my bone' make yon ivory miss!
Hush! foolish youth!" (aside thus Momus sung)
"Leave well alone! a statute has no tongue!"
Vain was the hint; the silliest of the Greeks
Repeats his vow, and gains the boon he seeks.
The statue woke to life, with eager spring
Pygmalion changed his chisel for a ring;
And as no parent lived to thwart his plans,
Of course no cross papa forbade the banns.

From that time forth, unwarmed by lover's breath,
Statues, or bone, or stone, have slept in death.
But if to-night, you bid *Eradne* thrive,
We hope to see the miracle revive.
To beauty's queen the Grecian poured his vow,
Our poet bends to beauty's daughters now;
Oh! may they waken his dramatic wife,
And, smiling, warm his statue into life!

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